

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SIG-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 EB-08
COME-00 /055 R

DRAFTED BY EA/EP:DMCCONVILLE:SRP
APPROVED BY EA/EP:AGEBER
EA/PHL:JSARTORIUS (DRAFT)
-----081210 060617Z /15

R 052352Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS STATE 002938

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEAN, OCON

SUBJECT: FIRST ASEAN PUBLIC RELATIONS CONGRESS,
JANUARY 23-27

REF: MANILA 0080

1. AS REQUESTED REFTTEL, WE CONTACTED MRS. REA SMITH,
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF
AMERICA (PRSA), CONCERNING THE INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE FIRST ASEAN PUBLIC RELATIONS CONGRESS. PRSA HAD
NO RECORD OF RECEIVING AN INVITATION AND WAS NOT
PREVIOUSLY AWARE OF THE CONGRESS.

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2. WHEN WE EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO
EXTEND AN INVITATION IN THE EVENT THE FORMAL INVITATION
HAD GONE ASTRAY, MRS. SMITH RESPONDED THAT IN VIEW OF
PRSA'S DOMESTIC ORIENTATION, SHE COULD NOT JUSTIFY
SENDING A REPRESENTATIVE FROM HER STAFF. SHE CONSIDERED
THE LEAD TIME INSUFFICIENT TO TRY TO CANVAS MEMBERSHIP
FOR ANY POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION.

3. FOLLOWING THE EMBASSY'S SUGGESTION IN PARA. 3 REFTEL, AND WITH MRS. SMITH'S ENCOURAGEMENT, WE CONTACTED SENIOR OFFICIALS OF DRSA MEMBER FIRMS WITH PHILIPPINE-BASED

AFFILIATES, I.E. HILL AND KNOWLTON AND RUDER AND FINN DIRECTLY. THE RESPONSES IN BOTH CASES WERE NEGATIVE. WE DID NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTACT LEXINGTON WHICH IS LISTED AS AN ADVERTISING FIRM RATHER THAN A PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM. PRSA WAS UNABLE TO FURNISH US WITH ANY OTHER LEADS, SINCE THEIR FILES ON MEMBER FIRMS DO NOT CONTAIN INFORMATION ON OVERSEAS BRANCHES OR AFFILIATES.

4. WILLIAM DURBAN, CHAIRMAN OF HILL AND KNOWLTON, INDICATED THAT HIS FIRM'S ONLY TIE IN THE PHILIPPINES IS THROUGH AN AFFILIATION WITH THE INDEPENDENT LOCAL FIRM, PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATORS, INC., HEADED BY LEO LARKIN. HE ASSUMED LARKIN MIGHT WANT TO PARTICIPATE ON HIS OWN BEHALF, BUT WAS VERY DUBIOUS ABOUT THE APPROPRIATENESS OF HAVING LARKIN ACT AS A REPRESENTATIVE FOR HILL AND KNOWLTON OR PRSA IN VIEW OF THE LIMITED NATURE OF THE TIE BETWEEN LARKIN'S FIRM AND HILL AND KNOWLTON. HE SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY TAKE MATTER UP DIRECTLY WITH LARKIN WHOSE ADDRESS IS 107 ESTEBAN ST., VALDERAMA BLDG., 4TH FLOOR, LEGASPI VILLAGE, MAKATI, METRO MANILA 3117.
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5. MR. RUDER OF RUDER AND FINN SAID HIS FIRM HAD DISCONTINUED SOME TIME AGO ITS PREVIOUS AFFILIATION WITH A PHILIPPINE-BASED FIRM. THE PREVIOUS AFFILIATE HAS SINCE GONE THROUGH SEVERAL CHANGES OF CORPORATE IDENTITY. HE HAD RECENTLY COME ACROSS A COPY OF ITS LETTERHEAD STATIONARY WHICH INDICATED A PURPORTED AFFILIATION WITH RUDER AND FINN. HE HAS WRITTEN A LETTER DEMANDING THAT THIS BE CORRECTED IMMEDIATELY. HAVING NO FURTHER TIES IN THE PHILIPPINES, RUDER SAID HIS OWN FIRM WAS NOT INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE SUBJECT CONGRESS.

6. JUDGING FROM THE ABOVE CONTACTS, THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF GENERATING SUFFICIENT INTEREST AMONG US PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRMS TO ORGANIZE ANY SORT OF REPRESENTATION AT THIS LATE DATE. WE SUGGEST THAT THE EMBASSY CONVEY PRSA'S REGRETS EXPLAINING THAT THE EARLIER INVITATION APPARENTLY WENT ASTRAY AND THAT THERE IS INSUFFICIENT TIME REMAINING NOW TO ADEQUATELY DETERMINE THE INTEREST OF PRSA MEMBERSHIP IN PARTICIPATING IN THE SUBJECT CONGRESS.

CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE002938
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DMCCONVILLE:SRP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780009-0939
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780194/aaaadbus.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 74a201e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MANILA 80
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3821677
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIRST ASEAN PUBLIC RELATIONS CONGRESS, JANUARY 23-27
TAGS: OCON, ASEAN
To: MANILA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/74a201e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014